

**HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
NOVEMBER 10, 2008**

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by chairman, Yale Cantor at 6:35 P.M.

PRESENT: Yale Cantor, Hassan Salley, Melinda Ferry, Dennis Frawley, Helen Filloramo, Sue Stack, Suzanne Hannigan, Doris Crayton.

OTHERS PRESENT: David A. Engleson, Executive Director of Hockanum Valley Community Council, Inc.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motioned (M. Ferry), Seconded (S. Stack) and approved by all those present to accept the minutes of the October 20, 2008 meeting.

PRESENTATION: An overview of the programs and services offered by Hockanum Valley Community Council, Inc. with emphasis on the Dial-A-Ride Program and counseling services. David Engelson began by informing the Commission that Hockanum Valley will be moving out of its present location at 155 West Main Street at the end of June. Transportation services and elderly services have been relocated to the Healthwise building on Naek Road in Vernon.

Hockanum Valley has a budget of 1.5 million dollars and has a staff of more than 50 employees. Since July 1, 2008 to October 30, 2008 Ellington had 20 unduplicated riders. In October there were 53 trips for Ellington riders. Mr. Engelson pointed out that Ellington has a long-term, high cancellation rate. There were 21 cancellations in the month of October. The director will meet with the senior center transportation staff to see if they have suggestions on how to reduce this high cancellation rate.

128 Ellington residents were evaluated by Hockanum Valley during the past 12 months. This represents one-tenth of the 1001 new clients seen in the past year. Of those 79 were males, 49 female. Nineteen were under the age of 18 and ten were over the age of 60. Mr. Engelson asked The Commission to consider paying for counseling services. At the January meeting, the human services director will research and report to the Commission on Hockanum Valley's counseling request. Hockanum Valley also has a program called RESPECT which focuses on HIV prevention through counseling, awareness, and identification of risky behaviors.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: The holiday season of sharing is wrapping up with recipients and donors being matched. The Exchange Club has stated that they will deliver food baskets to 11 Ellington residents for Thanksgiving. Human Services will purchase 16 twenty-five dollar supermarket gift cards from the Big Y for Thanksgiving and Christmas to be used for emergencies.

As expected the Energy Program was inundated with calls on the first day of eligible fuel deliveries. The demand for heating assistance continues to outpace our ability to schedule appointments especially emergency appointments of "no oil". Clients who heat with electricity are being told to apply after December 1, 2008.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: The holiday season of sharing is wrapping up with recipients and donors being matched. The Exchange Club has stated that they will not be distributing food baskets for Thanksgiving and Christmas this year. This late notice left us to come up with a contingency plan. The director will purchase 16 twenty-five dollar gift cards from the Big Y Supermarket. The Exchange Club is usually responsible for distributing 12 to 25 food baskets for us.

Jean Bissel, has been hired as the new bookkeeper/ assistant to the senior center director. This is a 25-hour per week position. Jean will begin working on November 12, 2008. Noreen Staiger who formerly held this position will provide two full days of training.

The senior center raised \$601.00 from their annual holiday bazaar held this past Saturday.

OLD BUSINESS: The director of human services was requested to be present at the joint meeting of the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance to discuss the expansion of the Arbor Common Complex. (Minutes are attached)

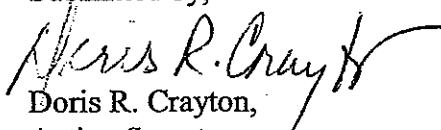
At the October 20th Board of Selectmen meeting, our liaison Laurie Burstein advocated for the Town of Ellington to support Human Services in applying for transportation grants to meet the needs of seniors for additional transport service. The senior center van is older and experiencing more mechanical problems. When the van is out of service the center must rely on the vehicle used by elderly outreach or the town planner. Ms Burstein will continue to advocate and encourage the Town to help the senior center obtain a reliable vehicle for the transportation program.

NEW BUSINESS: Letters were mailed out to the contract agencies. We should be able to begin the budget process at the January 2009 meeting. Our hope is to complete the process early this Year before the February 2009 deadline. This year's budget will focus on creating a line item to fund the prevention coordinator position.

There will be no Human Services Commission meeting in December so that staff can help in distributing and delivering holiday gifts.

ADJOURNMENT: Motioned (H. Salley), Seconded (M. Ferry) and passed by all those present to adjourn at 7:40 P.M.

Submitted by,


Doris R. Crayton,
Acting Secretary